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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/957,458	09/21/2001	Yu-Hua Una Chen-Bettecken	P66567US0	2503
7590	06/06/2006		EXAMINER	
JACOBSON HOLMAN 400 SEVENTH STREET, N.W. WASHINGTON, DC 20004				CROUCH, DEBORAH
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1632	

DATE MAILED: 06/06/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/957,458	CHEN-BETTECKEN, YU-HUA UNA
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Deborah Crouch, Ph.D.	1632

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 March 2006.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 18-28 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 18-28 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on 21 September 2001 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner. Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a). Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6) Other: _____.

Applicant's arguments filed March 27, 2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. The amendment has been entered. Claims 18-28 are pending.

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 18, 20-25 and 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by EP 0753574 A1 (Emerson).

Emerson teaches the co-culture of fibroblasts and hematopoietic stem cells with stem cells transfected with a plasmid have GMCSF operably linked to a metallothionein promoter (col. 2, lines 31-40; col. 9, lines 17-40, lines 49-55; col. 9, line 59 to col. 10, line 2; and col. 10, lines 3-6). Expression of GM-CSF is regulated by the presence of metallothionein in the culture media. The transfected stem cells form a microenvironment for the maintenance of stem cells in an undifferentiated state. Fibroblasts are a tissue cell as they are found in tissues. Thus Emerson clearly anticipates the claimed invention.

Applicant argues Emerson fails to disclose or suggest the specific supporter cells claimed. This is not persuasive. Fibroblasts are isolated from tissue, and therefore constitute tissue cells. There is no definition of tissue cells in the specification.

Applicant argues that Emerson does not teach a regulatable expression system that is stopped or started by application of an external signal. This argument is not persuasive. The metallothionein promoter is an inducible promoter. However, and more to the point, the claim does not require the external signal to act on the promoter, nor is there a requirement to actively stop the method. Thus, metallothionein is in the culture media of Emerson,

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otherwise there would not be expression of the gene. Since the claims do not require the induce to be withdrawn, Emerson need not teach that to be properly applied to the claims.

Claims 19, 26 and 27 would be allowable if written in independent form.

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Deborah Crouch, Ph.D. whose telephone number is 571-272-0727. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Fri, 7:30 AM to 4:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ram Shukla, Ph.D. can be reached on 571-272-0735. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Deborah Crouch, Ph.D.
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1632

June 3, 2006